

What is *The Cochrane Library*?

The Cochrane Library is a medical resource now available on-line (i.e., via the internet). It is a series of complete systematic reviews of the randomized controlled trials about a particular subject. Each question is reviewed in great detail, and then condensed to a compact review. Currently there are over 1200 Systematic Reviews and over 2200 Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effectiveness. More are added daily.

The on-line *Cochrane Library* has been made available to I/T/U providers by the IHS Office of Public Health, beginning in December 2001.

What are the goals of the Cochrane Collaboration?

The Cochrane Collaboration is an international organization that aims to help people make well-informed decisions about healthcare by preparing, maintaining and promoting the accessibility of systematic reviews of the effects of healthcare interventions.

The Cochrane Library can help you

- Making clinical decisions
- Preparing clinical pathways, guidelines, and protocols
- Developing best practices or quality improvement strategies

How do I access *The Cochrane Library* on line?

If you are using the internet on a computer within the IHS WAN, go to www.cochranelibrary.com/enter/ and click the green ENTER button; no password is needed.

If you are using the internet at home or at a site outside the IHS WAN, go to www.cochranelibrary.com/enter/ and enter the username and password.


How do I get the password information?

Password information can be obtained by filling out a password request at the IHS Clinical Information Resources web site:
www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/cir/clinicalquestions.asp









Downloadable User Guide from Cochrane

www.cochranelibrary.com/Cochrane/default.HTM

First time user?

Click the  button for good information for first time users.

Cochrane Toolbar

	Exit the Library and log off the system
	The Database table. Shows the number of 'hits' for the last search within each section of each database
	The Records table lists the titles of records meeting the search criteria within a section of a database
	Your opportunity to comment. An online form is always available
	Only available for the CCTR database, allows downloading selected references
	Step by step instructions on how to use The Cochrane Library
	Displays the previous 25 titles in the Records table meeting the search criteria
	Displays the next 25 titles in the Records table meeting the search criteria (if more than 25 records meet the search criteria)

Recommended place to start

1. Type in your Search term in the box at the top of the Database list, e.g., "asthma." The database list will highlight the databases where the search term has been found and the number of hits.
2. Click on *Complete Reviews* under the first category: Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews. Browse through the list (there will be 140 or so). Use the Next or Previous buttons at the top of the screen to move forward or backward in the list.
3. Click on a topic to open, e.g., Corticosteroids for preventing relapse following acute exacerbations of asthma. (It is on the second page of reviews if you search under the word 'asthma') The first document section is an Abstract. Additional detailed information such as Background, Methods, Results, etc. are further down in the document.

You can scroll through the entire document, or click on the links at the top of the document to take you directly to the topic.

Note: at any time, you can click on the Records icon to return to the topic list. Or click on the Database icon to return to the main Cochrane database and search page.

4. Scroll down through the Abstract to the **Reviewers' conclusions** and read it. Many times it will let you know in seconds if you should scan the whole review, e.g., ***"Reviewers' conclusions: A short course of corticosteroids following assessment for an acute exacerbation of asthma significantly reduces the number of relapses to additional care and decreases beta-agonist use without an apparent increase in side effects. Intramuscular corticosteroids appear as effective as oral agents."***
5. Scroll down about halfway through the document to **Reviewers' conclusions: Implications for practice**. This is usually a really concise review of what you need to know on this topic. It can spur you to look further in this Review or to go back out to the menu with the list of other Reviews on this Search word.

6. **Tables & Graphs** link near the top of the Review will take you further down into the document to a list that contains MetaView graphs.

MetaView must be installed on a workstation to view the graphs. To install, go to Cochrane's enter page www.cochranelibrary.com/enter/ and follow the MetaView link and instructions. If you can get the MetaView graphs installed, they are really helpful.

7. Click [MetaView graphs](#) to open. The MetaView graphs present the information in easy to read format based on the Odds Ratio or Weighted Mean difference.

Note: If you don't know what that means....don't give up...that just means, if the line is completely to the left of vertical dark index line, then that variable is positively associated with a good outcome, e.g., less admissions to the hospital or less relapse rates. If the line is completely to the right of the vertical dark index line, then it is negatively associated with the variable, e.g. higher admission rates or higher relapse rates. If the line touches or crosses the index line, then you can not comment on the association either way.

In the example mentioned in #3 above about asthma relapse rates, Cochrane only found positive associations with 2 clinical variables, e.g., less admissions, and less relapses after IM injections. These two lines are completely to the left of the index line. Cochrane could not comment on side effects or relapse rates in oral steroids because the last two variables cross the center index line at 1. There are no negatively associated variables in this example, because none of the lines are completely to the right of the index line.

Logging off

Click on Exit at the top of the screen to log off Cochrane.

The system will automatically log you off if you haven't used the screen for 15 minutes. You will then need to log in again.

Contact for questions:

help@cochranelibrary.com

or contact the USA office in Vista, CA Phone: 760-631-5844 or Fax: 760-631-5848

This Cochrane web site also has some training materials:

<http://www.cochrane.de/>

Clinical questions:

Any clinical questions on how to use the Cochrane Library?

Please contact Neil Murphy; nmurphy@anmc.org; 907-729-3154 (desk phone with voice mail). Neil is located in Anchorage, AK, 4 hours earlier than the East Coast, time-wise.



IHS Users Guide for *The Cochrane Library*

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The Cochrane Library is a medical
information resource available
on-line through
the Indian Health Service
Clinical Information Resources
web page

www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/cir/

